

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 11-14, and 16-21 are currently pending. Claims 8, 9, and 17-19 have been withdrawn due to restriction requirement. Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 11-14, and 17 have been withdrawn because the claims were allegedly amended in the Applicants response dated May 23, 2011, to be directed to a non-elected species. In response to the withdrawal of these claims, Applicants' undersigned attorney spoke with Examiner Spisich on September 15, 2011, requesting reconsideration of the withdrawal of these claims. Examiner Spisich agreed to consider these withdrawn claims in this prosecution if Applicants amended the claims to fall within the scope of Species 1 (Figures 1-8). In response to this guidance, claim 1 has been amended in a manner Applicants believe places this claims within the scope of Species 1. Support for this amendment can be found at, for example, Figures 1 to 8. In addition, claim 16 has been amended and new claim 21 has been added. No new matter has been added.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Claim Rejections

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over US Patent No. 2,706,825 (hereafter "Blakeman") in view of US Publication No. 2004/0025275 (hereafter "Moskovich"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because neither reference individually or in combination teaches or suggests the claimed invention.

Claim 16 has been amended to recite "the support comprising at least one plastic material rib disposed generally longitudinally, the rib having a width that is narrower than the width of the head . . ." Such a construction is neither taught nor suggested by Blakeman and Moskovich does not remedy this deficiency. Accordingly, for at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejected based on 35 USC § 103.

Rejections from Office Action dated February 23, 2011

35 U.S.C. § 102 Claim Rejections

In the office action dated February 23, 2011, claims 1-3, 6, 7, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,706,825 (hereafter "Blakeman"). Although this rejection was not asserted in the present office action, for the sake of clarity, Applicants respectfully assert that Blakeman does not teach or suggest the claimed invention of the presently amended claims.

Blakeman discloses a toothbrush head comprising a flexible bristle carrier (20) supported by a part (12,13) leaving the carrier unsupported between its longitudinally opposed ends. The head and handle may be made of plastic. Claim 1 has been amended to

recite “the support comprising at least one plastic material rib disposed generally longitudinally, the rib having a width that is narrower than the width of the head . . .” Such a construction is neither taught nor suggested by Blakeman.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Claim Rejections

In the office action dated February 23, 2011, claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as allegedly being obvious over Blakeman in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,036,277 (hereafter “Weihrauch”). Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as allegedly being obvious over Blakeman in view of WO 98/43514. Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being obvious over Blakeman in view of U.S. Publication No. 2004/0025275 (hereafter “Moskovich”).

Although this rejection was not asserted in the present office action, for the sake of clarity, Applicants assert that these cited references neither individually nor in combination, teach or suggest the claimed inventions. Claims 12, 13, and 14 are dependent upon claim 1. As previously stated, Blakeman does not teach or suggest the claimed invention at least because Blakeman does not teach or suggest “the support comprising at least one plastic material rib disposed generally longitudinally, the rib having a width that is narrower than the width of the head . . .” Furthermore, none of the cited secondary references remedy this deficiency.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and an indication of allowability of all pending claims is requested respectfully. Should the Examiner have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this case, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned attorney at the number below.

Respectfully Submitted,
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